

but I think this is a prudent way of doing it. Make the investments, do it exactly as the bill would do it, but don't spend the principal, spend the earnings. Don't do the things the bill calls for until you have the money in hand.

I think that is a simple principle. The people understand it. I would appreciate if they would vote for it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 21, nays 78, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 349 Leg.]

YEAS—21

| | | |
|----------|------------|------------|
| Allard | Fitzgerald | Lugar |
| Bond | Frist | McCain |
| Bunning | Gramm | McConnell |
| Burns | Gregg | Nickles |
| Campbell | Helms | Smith (NH) |
| Cochran | Kyl | Thomas |
| Ensign | Lott | Thompson |

NAYS—78

| | | |
|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Akaka | Domenici | Mikulski |
| Allen | Dorgan | Miller |
| Baucus | Durbin | Murkowski |
| Bayh | Edwards | Murray |
| Bennett | Enzi | Nelson (FL) |
| Biden | Feingold | Nelson (NE) |
| Bingaman | Feinstein | Reed |
| Boxer | Graham | Reid |
| Breaux | Grassley | Roberts |
| Brownback | Hagel | Rockefeller |
| Byrd | Harkin | Santorum |
| Cantwell | Hatch | Sarbanes |
| Carnahan | Hollings | Schumer |
| Carper | Hutchinson | Sessions |
| Chafee | Inhofe | Shelby |
| Cleland | Inouye | Smith (OR) |
| Clinton | Jeffords | Snowe |
| Collins | Johnson | Specter |
| Conrad | Kennedy | Stabenow |
| Corzine | Kerry | Stevens |
| Craig | Kohl | Thurmond |
| Crapo | Landrieu | Torricelli |
| Daschle | Leahy | Voinovich |
| Dayton | Levin | Warner |
| DeWine | Lieberman | Wellstone |
| Dodd | Lincoln | Wyden |

NOT VOTING—1

Hutchison

The amendment was rejected.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, I would like to bring attention to one particular segment of the railroad industry—commuter rail. As a Senator from Illinois, I have had the opportunity to become very acquainted with the excellent commuter rail system that serves Chicago and northeastern Illinois. This system—Metra—is the second largest commuter rail system in the country and is a key part of the overall, growing, commuter rail industry. Metra employs between 2,500 and 3,000 workers, nearly all of whom are covered under the Railroad Retirement Board benefit plan.

The extent of commuter rail's growth over recent decades is made clear by looking at the number of workers that it employs. Nationally, roughly one-quarter of all rail employees work for commuter and passenger rail, and it is expected that this number will grow substantially in the future.

For these reasons, I believe commuter rail, because of its growing size, importance, and impact, should be represented on the Railroad Retirement Board of Trustees that is created by this bill. As this bill moves forward in the legislative process, I hope that I will be able to work with the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee and other conferees to ensure that commuter rail is represented on the Board of Trustees.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001. Finally, Congress is going to consider this important bill. I have been working to improve the benefits for our retired railroad workers for many years. Today, we can finally say that promises made are promises kept to our rail workers and their families.

The people who have made their contribution to family and to society by working on our Nation's railroads deserve a decent retirement. I know the job that railroad employees perform is very hard, very important work. Our country has an obligation to help those who have worked hard, saved, and played by the rules. That is why I am proud to have been a sponsor of Railroad Retirement Improvement legislation for many years and am proud to be a supporter of this bill.

I have been fighting to improve the benefits for railroad workers and their families since I was first elected to Congress. The retirement age for railroad workers and their spouses to qualify for railroad retirement benefits should be lowered. It is difficult for people and families to plan for their retirement in today's world, even with two salaries. That is why strengthening retirement benefits for all Americans has always been one of my highest priorities.

This bill is bipartisan. The House passed their version of this important bill by an overwhelming vote of 384-33. Seventy-four of my colleagues are co-sponsors of the Senate version of the Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001. The support for this measure is clear, and the time to act is now.

The Railroad Retirement and Survivor's Improvement Act expands benefits for the widows of rail employees and lowers the minimum retirement age at which employees with 30 years of experience are eligible for full retirement benefits to 60 years old. This legislation also reduces the number of years required to be fully vested for tier II benefits and expands the system's investment authority by creating an independent, non-governmental Railroad Retirement Trust Fund.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in standing up for our railroad retirees and their families and support this very important bill.

Mr. REID. I move to reconsider the vote by which the amendment was agreed to.

Mr. NICKLES. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

NATIONAL DAY OF RECONCILIATION

Mr. REID. Senator BROWNBACK and Senator AKAKA have asked me to make this announcement. They have worked very hard on a piece of legislation which is now law, setting forth today as a National Day of Reconciliation. Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate are encouraged to attend. The meeting is taking place in the Rotunda of the Capitol as we speak. It just started. During assembly, Members of both Houses gather to seek the blessings of Providence for forgiveness, reconciliation, unity, and charity for all of the people of the United States, thereby assisting the Nation to realize its potential as a champion of hope, a vindicator of the defenseless, and the guardian of freedom.

I hope all who are able will drop what they are doing and make themselves available at the Capitol Rotunda. It will go until 7 p.m. today.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for not to exceed 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DEATH OF MRS. ELISABETH THURMOND OF NORTH AUGUSTA, SC

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise today in remembrance of Mrs. Elisabeth T. Thurmond, my sister-in-law and a valued member of the community of North Augusta, SC, who passed away Friday, November 16, 2001, at the age of 90.

Elisabeth Thurmond, who was married to my late brother Dr. J. William Thurmond, will be remembered as a caring and generous woman. She was known for volunteering much of her time to serve the people of North Augusta and she made significant contributions to her community in a host